WP-10 SCRIPTURE & SCIENCE

The Heavens and the Earth: Physical Science in Scripture

STATEMENT

The Bible is not a science textbook, but where it describes the physical world it avoids the errors common to other ancient texts, and several of its descriptions match discoveries made thousands of years later.

Read time **3 min** | Sources & resources **6** | Series **Scripture & Science**

01 ABSTRACT

Ancient cosmologies placed the earth on pillars, on the back of a turtle, or under a solid dome. Against that background, the Bible's descriptions of the earth, the heavens and the water cycle stand out. This paper lists the comparisons, rates each one honestly (some are direct statements; others depend on how poetic language is read), and gives the date of the corresponding scientific discovery.

02 EVIDENCE

OBSERVATION	DATA & SOURCE	CONFIDENCE
The earth hangs on nothing	Job 26:7 says God "hangs the earth on nothing," at a time when other cultures described physical supports. Newton's gravitation (1687) explained how a body can be suspended in space.	HIGH
Hydrologic cycle	Ecclesiastes 1:7 (rivers run to the sea yet the sea never fills), Job 36:27–28 (water drawn up, distilled, poured down as rain) and Amos 9:6. Bernard Palissy (1580) is usually credited with the modern theory that rain sustains rivers.	HIGH
Paths of the seas	Psalm 8:8 refers to "paths of the seas." Matthew Fontaine Maury, a founder of modern oceanography, mapped ocean currents in the mid-1800s; his biographers say Psalm 8:8 inspired the search.	MODERATE
Expanding heavens	Job 9:8, Psalm 104:2 and Isaiah 40:22, 42:5, 44:24 and 51:13 describe God "stretching out the heavens." Edwin Hubble showed in 1929 that the universe is expanding. NASA: Edwin Hubble ↗	INTERPRETIVE
Wearing out (entropy)	Psalm 102:25–26, Isaiah 51:6 and Hebrews 1:11 say the heavens and earth will "wear out like old clothing." The Second Law of Thermodynamics was formalized from Carnot's 1824 work. ICR: Psalm 102:25–27 ↗	INTERPRETIVE

OBSERVATION	DATA & SOURCE	CONFIDENCE
Fire below the earth	Job 28:5: food grows on the surface while below the earth is “melted as by fire.” Oldham inferred Earth’s core from seismic data in 1906; it has a molten outer layer.	INTERPRETIVE
God outside time	2 Timothy 1:9 and Titus 1:2 describe God acting “before time began”; Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 describe Him perceiving time differently. Einstein’s relativity (1905–1915) showed time is a physical dimension that is part of the created universe.	INTERPRETIVE
Ark proportions	Genesis 6:15 gives the ark’s ratio as 300 × 50 × 30 cubits (6:1 length to beam), within the range of modern cargo ships. A 1993 study at the Korea Research Institute of Ships and Ocean Engineering found the proportions highly stable in rough seas.	MODERATE
Elements dissolving with heat	2 Peter 3:10 describes the elements melting with intense heat. Some read this as consistent with nuclear physics (Becquerel discovered radioactivity in 1896).	INTERPRETIVE

High = directly measured or widely accepted across worldviews. **Moderate** = well-supported, with recognized scholarly debate. **Interpretive** = consistent with the text, but depends on how the passage is read.

03 OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

OBJECTION

These are poetic passages being read with modern hindsight.

RESPONSE

Some are, and they are rated Interpretive above. The claim here is narrower: the Bible avoids the mythological errors of its neighbors, and its plain statements, such as the earth hanging on nothing and the water cycle, are accurate.

OBJECTION

The Bible also describes the sun “rising,” which is unscientific.

RESPONSE

So do weather forecasters today. That is ordinary observational language, not a cosmological claim.

OBJECTION

Other ancient texts got some things right too.

RESPONSE

True. The difference is that the Bible does not mix accurate observations with myths such as a flat earth on pillars or a sky held up by gods.

04 CONCLUSION

The Bible was written to reveal God, not to teach physics. Even so, its descriptions of the physical world have held up

remarkably well as science has advanced, and in no tested case has it been shown to be wrong.

> *"God stretches the northern sky over empty space and hangs the earth on nothing." Job 26:7*

05 FURTHER RESOURCES

VIDEO **Science in the Bible: Entropy** GCA
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsJmCYPnyKA

VIDEO **Beyond the Cosmos: How Science Reveals God's Trans-Dimensional Power** Dr. Hugh Ross
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dpWEntNOz8

VIDEO **The BEST FACTS: Science in the Bible** GCA
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FioB4CTj7OE&list=PL59Qh4Scw7PebBz1Q-ixu5G7RPxCLWMt1&index=11

ARTICLE **Can Bible-Based Predictions Lead to Scientific Discoveries?** Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell, AiG
https://answersingenesis.org/creation-science/can-bible-based-predictions-lead-to-scientific-discoveries/